

# NEGRO SLAVERY.

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No. XIV.

THE WEST INDIES AS THEY ARE;

OR, A

REAL PICTURE OF SLAVERY.

BY THE

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LATE NAVAL CHAPLAIN AT PORT-ROYAL, JAMAICA, SOME  
TIME CURATE OF THAT PARISH, &c.

A VOLUME bearing the above title has recently been published by Mr. Hatchard. It is the work of a clergyman of the Church of England, who resided for about five years in the West Indies, chiefly in the island of Jamaica; and is certainly an important as well as seasonable accession to our stock of information on a subject of peculiar interest. The writer appears to be a fair and unbiassed witness, who describes plainly and distinctly the scenes which have passed under his own eyes; and no one can peruse his observations without an impression of the fidelity of his statements. He paints the West Indies as they are in the eye of an impartial Christian observer, who sympathises with the West-Indians in the difficulties of their situation, and is solicitous both for their personal safety and for the security of their property. The tale, at the same time, which he has unfolded is a tale of horror, which establishes in their full extent the specific charges which have been preferred against the West-Indian system.

In the course of the last year the Anti-slavery Society published

"A Brief View of the Nature and Effects of Negro Slavery, as it exists in the Colonies of Great Britain." This statement has been vehemently attacked by different advocates of the colonial system, as false and calumnious. In order that the reader may judge of its correctness, a part of it will here be given for the purpose of more easy comparison with the statements of Mr. Bickell.

"In the colonies of Great Britain there are at this moment upwards of 800,000 human beings in a state of degrading personal slavery.

"These unhappy persons, whether young or old, male or female, are the absolute property of their master, who may sell or transfer them at his pleasure, and who may also regulate according to his discretion (within certain limits) the measure of their labour, their food, and their punishment."

"The Slaves being regarded in the eye of the law as mere chattels, they are liable to be seized in execution for their master's debts, and, without any regard to the family ties which may be broken by this oppressive and merciless process, to

be sold by auction to the highest bidder, who may remove them to a distant part of the same colony, or even exile them to another colony.”

—*Brief View.*

Now, it will be seen what confirmation these statements derive from Mr. Bickell's book.

“Slavery,” he remarks, “is confessedly one of the greatest evils that ever was inflicted on the human race, and has been considered as the greatest curse by all nations, in all ages of the world.” (p. 1.) “It was reserved for modern times, for men calling themselves Christians, and nations professing the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus, to carry this heaviest curse inflicted on the human race to its highest pitch.” (p. 3.)—Of this system, some of the harsher and more cruel features may have been done away. “Still, however, much remains to be done, both in a physical and religious point of view, before the Negroes can be said to approximate to even the lowest and worst paid poor of the British Islands.” (p. 4.)—“The great body of the colonists, with very few exceptions, look upon the Negroes as beings every way inferior to the Whites; and this is one great cause of their ill treatment, and being deprived of many little privileges which, I think, might with perfect safety be granted them.” (p. 8.) “They look upon the Blacks as much beneath themselves, as the brutes are beneath the Negroes; they think them hardly capable of religious impressions, and almost insensible to punishment. This is one great reason of their depressed state and frequent rigorous treatment.” (p. 197.) “These illiberal opinions,” he adds, “I can positively assert, are adopted and held by a great part of the colonists of the present day.”

“Another of the evils of slavery is, that the slaves are so degraded and depressed in the eye of the law as not to be considered persons, but mere animals or chattels; so that they can be sold, not only at the will and pleasure of their masters or owners, to any other person, at any part of the island, but can be seized and sold for debt, by a writ of execution, and exposed for sale at a public auction to the best bidder. Many a bitter cry is heard when the marshal's deputies (dogs as they are emphatically called) are sent to hunt down and seize the victim or victims, and drive or drag them away to the workhouse, or gaol, till the day of sale arrives, which is to deprive them of their little homes, the gardens they have cultivated, the acquaintances they have made, and all the little comforts which make even slavery, in some measure, tolerable. This hardship is much increased when slaves are married, or have families,

as the woman may be separated from her husband, or parents from their children; for here the tenderest ties of nature are broken in an instant, and the wife's, or mother's, or children's cries would not be in the least attended to, nor heeded; any more than the moans of so many [brute] animals.” pp. 16, 17.

“The distress and terror among a gang of Negroes, when the marshal's deputy, with his dogs and other assistants, comes to levy in a large way, cannot be conceived by those who, happily for themselves, have never been spectators of such scenes, and can scarcely be described by those who have witnessed them. I was once on a coffee-mountain, on which were about seventy or eighty Negroes. The proprietor was much in debt, and was aware that one or two of his largest creditors, had for some time wished to make a levy on his slaves to pay themselves; but by keeping his gates locked, and the fences round the dwelling-house and Negro-houses in good repair, he had hitherto baffled the Argus-eyed deputy and his deputies. The night after I arrived on the property, however, I was awaked, about an hour before daylight, by a great noise, as of arms, with cries of women and children. In a few minutes a private servant came to my window and informed me that it was the marshal's deputies making a levy on the Negroes, and that the noise proceeded from the clashing of weapons; for some of the slaves, he said, had stoutly resisted. I then alarmed my friend, and we determined to go out to see that no improper use was made of the tremendous power given to these Cerberuses. By the time we arrived at the Negro-houses the resistance had ceased; for the Negroes being divided, had been overcome by the myrmidons of the law. One poor fellow, however, was being dragged along like a thief by a fierce and horrid-looking Irishman, who had been one of McGregor's freebooters, and who, when we came near, grasped his victim more tightly, and brandished his broadsword over the poor creature with the grin and growl of a demon.

“Many of the men escaped from the property; and some few others, with some women, secreted themselves among the coffee trees, till the party had gone off with their prey. They secured, however, ten or twelve men, and many of the women and children, amounting in the whole to between thirty and forty, who were huddled together on the outside of the principal fence, and presented such a heart-rending scene as I never witnessed before, and should be very sorry ever to witness again. Some of the children had lost their mothers, and some of the mothers had been torn away from a part of their children; for some of the little urchins also escaped. One woman in particular, a housewoman, had six or seven children: two or three of them were seiz-

ed, and the others escaped ; but the youngest, an infant, had been caught, and she wept aloud and very bitterly for it, saying, that she must give herself up if the child was not got back, for she could not live separated from it. There was many a bitter cry and sad lament among the women and children ; for they loved their master, who was kind, and had excellent provision grounds for them ; but most of the men were dogged and sullen, and only wanted arms to obtain their freedom from the savage Whites and their associates, who now guarded them. As it was, two or three of the poor fellows were wounded ; and I was assured by a free Brown man, who was looking after the property in the master's absence, that had the proprietor been there, there would have been sad work, and very likely murder ; for it was an illegal levy, and the resistance would have been desperate under their master's eye and voice. They were tied together, or hand-cuffed, and driven off the same morning to Spanish-town gaol, a distance of twenty miles ; but as they had been seized before sun-rise, and the fence had been also broken through, both of which are illegal, the owner obtained their enlargement shortly after, and they were allowed to go back to the spot they loved. I might here remark, that the labour is much lighter on a coffee mountain than on a sugar estate, and that the Negroes are not required to be up so much *at night*, to pick and cure coffee, as they are to make sugar ; where, therefore, they have good provision grounds, as they had on this mountain I have been speaking of, they are much more comfortable, and less harassed than on a sugar estate." pp. 19-23.

Has any thing ever been written by Mr. Cooper or Mr. Meabry, or has any thing ever been asserted by Mr. Wilberforce or Mr. Buxton, more damnatory of the slave system than the above simple narrative of a respectable eye-witness ?

Mr. Bickell's book nowhere directly asserts the absolute right of property in his slaves possessed by the West-India planter. That right, however, is assumed throughout the work, as well as in all the arguments of West-Indians on this subject. In the absence of Mr. Bickell's direct testimony upon it, we shall be excused for referring to authority at least equally unquestionable.

The Report of the Committee of the Privy Council, made in 1780, states, that " the leading idea in the Negro system of jurisprudence was," " that Negroes were property..."

" The numerous laws passed in the different islands " " had uniformly this for their object." This principle has been at the root of all the laws of slavery which have prevailed in all our colonies without exception ; and it has hitherto undergone no modification. Nor is it merely tacitly assumed as the basis of legislation ; it is fully recognized in many recent acts of the colonial assemblies.

The practice is in strict accordance with the law. It is impossible to look into a West-Indian newspaper without seeing advertisements by proprietors of the sale of Negroes ; or by the marshals or undersheriffs, and by the collectors of the revenue, of slaves levied upon, either for debt or for taxes. For example, in the Royal Gazette of Jamaica, of June 15, 1823 : —

" For sale, Charlottenburg estate in the parish of St. Mary's, consisting of 982 acres of land, about 86 head of working stock, and 89 Negroes."

April 26, 1823. " For sale, 15 valuable young Negroes, together or singly, to suit purchasers."

May 10, 1823. " Notice is hereby given, that on Tuesday next I will put up to public sale, a Negro woman, named Violet, a Creole, accustomed to all sorts of work, levied upon for taxes due, by G. H. Swift."

April 26, 1823. For sale, under a writ of venditioni exponas, " Charles James, a Black, a waiting boy, aged 6 years, belonging to M. Freeman."

" William, a Black, a waiting boy, age 8 years, belonging to M. Muir."

" Frances, a Black, a field Negro, age 34 years, belonging to C. Cole."

" Quasheba, a Black, a drudge, age 28 years, belonging to Solomon Isaac."

Such extracts might be indefinitely multiplied. These will suffice to shew that men, women, and children, are regarded absolutely as property, and are seized and sold as unceremoniously as cattle or household goods for the payment of debts or of taxes, or are disposed of by proprietors in gangs, or singly, as best suits their interest.

It has indeed been confidently affirmed, that the law of Jamaica forbids the separation of families by sale. There is, however, no such law. And if there were, yet in practice it is obviously violated every day. There is a law, indeed, that when persons of the same family are seized by the marshal, they shall be sold together. But what law can ensure their being *seized*, as well as *sold* together? And even this law is no restraint on the power of the proprietor. He may sell *fifteen young Negroes, either together or singly*, as best suits his interest. And then, to look at the sales by the marshal or tax-gatherer, had Quasheba or Violet no relations or connexions, their ties with whom were torn asunder? Had the infants of six and eight years, sold singly, no parent, no brother, no sister? These facts speak volumes.

Nothing can shew more strongly, the extreme vigilance with which this right of property is guarded in the West Indies than the fact that when Colonel Arthur had communicated to Earl Bathurst the details of a most atrocious series of barbarities, exercised by one Carty upon a female slave, his lordship was compelled thus to write in reply: "The cruel conduct of this inhuman wretch could not fail to excite feelings of pity and commiseration; and I immediately submitted your letter, &c. to the law officers of the crown, to know how far I was authorised to direct you to manumit the unfortunate woman. But they report, that Carty is indictable only for the cruelty committed; *that as she is his property, there is no power to take her away*, consequently none for her manumission. I can only therefore express my concern that such a wretch should remain unpunished."

Now if the absolute and uncontrollable right of property vested in the slave-holder be such as to force his Majesty's Government to declare their utter impotency to redress such grievous wrongs, it will follow as a matter of course that

the master's discretion will regulate, within certain limits, the measure of a slave's labour, as well as of his food and punishment. To what privations and sufferings would not a mother submit, before she would expose herself to the exercise of the master's power of separating her from her children? The following occurrence related by Mr. Gilgrass, a Methodist missionary, speaks volumes on this point.

"A master of slaves who lived near us in Kingston, Jamaica, exercised his barbarities on a Sabbath morning, while we were worshipping God in the chapel; and the cries of the female sufferers have frequently interrupted us in our devotions. But there was no redress for them or for us. This man wanted money; and one of the female slaves having two fine children, he sold one of them, and the child was torn from her maternal affection. In the agony of her feelings she made a hideous howling, and for that crime was flogged. Soon after he sold her other child. This, 'turned her heart within her,' and impelled her into a kind of madness. She howled night and day in the yard; tore her hair; ran up and down the streets and the parade, rending the heavens with her cries, and literally watering the earth with her tears. Her constant cry was, '*Da wicked massa Jew, he sell my children. Will no Buckra massa pity Negar? What me do? Me no have one child!*' As she stood before the window, she said, lifting up her hands towards heaven, '*My massa, do, my massa minister, pity me! My heart do so*' (shaking herself violently), '*my heart do so, because me have no child. Me go to massa house, in massa yard, and in my hut, and me no see'em.*' And then her cry went up to God."—(Watson's Defence of Methodists, p. 26.)

"Many of the slaves are (and all may be) branded, by means of a hot iron, on the shoulder or other conspicuous part of the body, with the initials of their master's name, and

thus bear about them, in indelible characters, the proof of their debased and servile state."—*Brief View*.

"With respect to this horrid custom of branding the slaves," observes Mr. Bickell, "it is not so common now as it was before the abolition of the slave trade: for then it was customary to brand the greater part, that they might be known in case of running away. The Creoles, or those born in the colonies, are not so apt to desert, though many of them are branded when they are inclined to wander, as may be seen by consulting any of the work-house lists that are published in some of the weekly newspapers of the islands. It is a horrid practice, for it must be attended with very acute and lasting pain besides the disgraceful and disgusting appearance of seeing a human being marked like, or worse than, a horse,—because that principle that unconquerable desire of freedom, or liberty, implanted in every mind, has tempted the unfortunate being to quit a place of ill treatment; for they seldom run away unless they have been ill used in some way or other." p. 37.

Mr. Bickell confirms this statement, by a long list of instances, occupying nine or ten pages, taken from the Jamaica newspapers. We shall extract only a very few specimens.

"John Stevens, a likely young Creole Negro man, 5ft. 6½in. marked MI on left shoulder, has a large scar on the left side of his throat, and other scars between his shoulders and neck, to the estate of Mr. Mark, of Black River, dec.—Aug. 5. 1823." p. 39.

"Philip, a Creole Sambo man, of Carthagena, 5ft. 5in. marked ICD on left, and LH apparently, but blotched, on right shoulder, to Charles Newman, Esq. Manchester.—Sept. 10, 1823." p. 39.

"Richard, a Creole, 5ft. 5½in. marked apparently CC and CA on shoulders, and CA on left cheek, to Syssons estate.—Sept. 29, 1823." p. 43.

"William Nelson, alias Thomas Mole, an Eboe, 5ft. 5½in. marked ASIA on shoulders, breasts, and cheeks, to Mr. Holmes, of Vere.—Oct. 17, 1823." p. 44.

"The Slaves, whether male or female, are driven to hard labour by the impulse of the cart-whip, for the sole benefit of their owners, from whom they receive no wages; and this labour is continued (with cer-

tain intermissions for breakfast and dinner), from morning to night, throughout the year.

"In the season of crop, which lasts for four or five months of the year, their labour is protracted not only throughout the day, as at other times, but during either half the night or the whole of every alternate night.

"Besides being made to work under the lash, without wages, during six days of the week, the Slaves are further obliged to labour for their own maintenance on that day which ought to be devoted to repose and religious instruction. And as that day is also their only market-day, it follows that 'Sunday shines no Sabbath-day to them,' but is of necessity a day of worldly occupation, and much bodily exertion.

"The colonial laws arm the master, or any one to whom he may delegate his authority, with a power to punish his slaves to a certain extent, without the intervention of the magistrate, and without any responsibility for the use of this tremendous discretion; and to that extent he may punish them for any offence, or for no offence. These discretionary punishments are usually inflicted on the naked body, with the cart-whip, an instrument of dreadful severity, which cruelly lacerates the flesh of the sufferer. Even the unhappy females are equally liable with the men to have their persons thus shamelessly exposed and barbarously tortured, at the caprice of their master or overseer."—*Brief View*.

On these several heads Mr. Bickell is clear and copious in his statements.

"The universal custom in Jamaica," he observes, "is not to allow the slaves any wages, (except a few domestics in the towns, where they are allowed from two shillings and three pence to three shillings sterling per week\*), but to each slave is apportioned a piece of land, which he is to cultivate at the portions of time allowed

\* Mr. Bickell calls the money allowed to domestic slaves, in towns, wages; whereas it is not wages, but merely the subsistence money allowed by law, in lieu of the produce of provision grounds,—in fact, "board wages," which is quite a distinct thing from wages. The law on this subject will be found in the 6th clause of the Slave Code of Dec. 1816; and it ordains, that "where there are not proper lands, each slave is to have provisions equal to 3s. 4d. per week," which is equal to 2s. 4½d. sterling.

him, and on which he raises roots and other vegetables, such as yams, cocoas, and plantains, for himself and family, if he have any: the females have portions of land as well as the men, and provide for themselves, when single; but when married or living constantly with a man, they often unite their grounds, and conjointly labour for themselves and families, till the children arrive at a certain age, when they must provide for themselves. The vegetables, provisions as they call them, they commonly boil in an iron pot (sometimes they roast them) in the open air, and to qualify them they are allowed a few salt herrings each, not always of the best kind; and they are served out to them once a week or fortnight, most commonly the former; but at Christmas, on most estates and plantations, they have an extra allowance of salt cod-fish, which they use in like manner." p. 9.

"All the field slaves are allowed by the law of the island, every other Saturday out of crop-time, and some extra days after crop, to make up the number of twenty-six days in the year, when they are to labour in their grounds to raise provisions for their subsistence. Crop-time means the time that the mill is at work for grinding canes to make sugar, and this generally lasts from Christmas to June or July; so that the slaves get only from fourteen to sixteen days in the year, besides a few extra days after crop, in which to work their grounds, and on many estates and plantations they get no extra days at all: so that these few days being wholly insufficient, the Sundays are intruded on; and the Sabbath, therefore, is with most a day of labour instead of a day of rest.

"This is certainly a hardship, and shews that the object of the planters is to obtain the greatest quantity of labour possible." pp. 11, 12.

"This is also a principal cause of one of the greatest hardships in West-Indian slavery; I mean, the constant use of the whip; for, seeing that work is their only portion, they are, as I before observed, inclined to be indolent, and a driver is continually after them in the field, to flog them with his heavy whip, if they do not work so hard as he thinks they ought. It is certainly a most degrading sight to see one fellow-creature following twenty, thirty, or forty others, and every now and then lashing them as he would a team of horses or mules: but this is not all; for if any one offends more than ordinarily, master driver, who has almost unlimited power, takes him or her from the ranks, and, having two or three strong Negroes to hold the culprit down, lays on twenty or thirty lashes, with all his might. Thirty-nine is the number specified by law, beyond which even a White man cannot legally go in one day; but I have seen a Black driver lay on, most unmercifully upwards of forty at one time, whilst his fellow-slave was crying out for

mercy, so that he could be heard a quarter of a mile from the spot." pp. 12, 13.

"I once saw it done in the mountains of Port-Royal, on a property belonging to a Mr. Regnier, I was walking out with a Mr. Jackson, the custos of the parish, who had a coffee mountain near, when we heard the cries of some one as being punished, and the sound of a whip. On looking down from the mountain where we were, we saw a Negro on the side of another mountain, held down on his stomach, and the driver flogging him with all his strength. Curiosity led us to see how many lashes he would lay on before he stopped; and he had exceeded forty, before I called out aloud to him to desist. He then ceased, and I asked what had made him flog the other so severely; when he replied, that the offender had been set to watch his master's provision grounds, last night, and had suffered some of the plantains to be stolen, or had stolen them himself.

"Though this driver had exceeded the number which even a White man can inflict by the laws of Jamaica, I never heard that he was degraded or punished for it; and yet the chief magistrate in the parish witnessed the illegal stripes." pp. 197, 198.

"I do not think," he adds, "that the whip can be entirely laid aside whilst slavery exists;"—"but the present use of it should be abolished, and no punishment should be inflicted even by order of an overseer, but of some neighbouring magistrate; for most of the overseers are too fond of flogging, and feel no more for the cries of a Negro than they would for the howling of a dog. Those daily punishments of the present horrid system, for indolence or other trivial faults, lose more over their intended effect; for the frequency hardens the poor wretches, and makes them less willing to exert themselves, for after all their endeavours they are not certain of giving satisfaction.

"On every estate or plantation, there are also stocks, in which a proprietor or overseer can place any of the Negroes, for real or supposed faults, as often as he pleases. When a slave has offended more than commonly, he is placed in them for a considerable time, day and night; but sometimes he is sent to the field to work under the inspection and charge of another in the day, and sent back to the stocks again at night. This is often done when they are given to running away, or after a severe flogging, when they are suspected of being inclined to desert. Sometimes for greater safety, and an increase of punishment, they are sent, without the interference of a magistrate, to the parish workhouse, or gaol, where they get a severe thirty-nine at going in and coming out, and are worked in pairs, chained together by the neck: in this manner they go out to work on the roads, or in the streets, with a workhouse driver after them, who lashes them pretty sharply to urge them on." pp. 14, 15.

"The power which every owner, or every overseer or other deputy, possesses of flogging the slaves daily, is indeed a dreadful engine of oppression, and cannot, in my humble opinion, be too soon abolished. It is not enough to say that very few take advantage of that power given them by the law: I would reply, it is neither fit nor just that one single person should be able to do so; for as long as the present law exists, there will be found too many hard-hearted and unfeeling masters and mistresses, and overseers, to put the whip in frequent requisition. I have heard of a White lady of good property, of the parish of Westmoreland, who was accustomed to send her female slaves to a large pond, a cattle-pond, to wash themselves, whilst she herself would be mounted on a charger, and would point out to a driver, or some flogging assistant, such and such females as were to be flogged in their naked state!!!

"I knew another lady in the parish of Port-Royal, who had a female slave of Colour, of whom she was rather jealous, (perhaps not without reason, for the poor slave could not long resist the entreaties and presents of her master,) and was in the habit of punishing her severely with her own hand, till the unfortunate creature like Hagar, the Egyptian, of old, wept aloud for the hardness of her bondage. She was allowed to go out as a servant; and a gentleman of Kingston hired her, and was much pleased, as I heard him say, with her industry and attention to his domestic affairs. The mistress however was not content, but thought her too happy and too well off: so she ordered her back again to her own residence; where the horrible scene of jealousy and consequent flagellation was renewed.

"I was once present at a sitting of magistrates at Port-Royal, when a complaint was laid by several female Negroes and children, who, through ill treatment, had run away from a certain coffee-mountain, and had come to the magistrates for redress. The complaint was, that they had not enough to eat, and had been cruelly punished: for, being domestic slaves, they had pilfered a little provision; to the best of my recollection, a little biscuit and a few plantains, or a yam or two from the store. For this they were severely punished, by their mistress's order, by a stout male slave, who beat them with a stick, or flogged them more than once. Young mistress also, two of them said, had helped to punish them. Whether this last were true or not, I will not pretend to say; but this I know, that the two women who were the principal complainants looked as if they had been half-starved, and their backs were most cruelly mangled, from their shoulders downwards. They were in such a state that I could not bear to look at them after the first sight, but turned my face away while the examination went on.

"The above cause of their being punished was elicited from themselves; and, from their miserable and pitiable appearance, it must have been sheer want and keen hunger that drove them to take a little food to satisfy craving nature. That their punishment had been much too severe was manifest to every one; but the principal examining magistrate had been appointed by the Custos of the parish, (the owner of these slaves being a relation,) and was completely his creature; he was therefore inclined to throw a veil over the affair, and for this purpose questioned a Jew, the deputy-president of the workhouse and flogging-master-general, as to the severity of the beating and flogging. 'Do you think,' said this magistrate and president of the workhouse, 'do you think, Mr. B., that a person receiving thirty-nine lashes would have his back injured as much as the backs of these women?' The poor Jew, having some little feeling left, was almost ashamed to say, Yes, and did not dare at the risk of his situation to say, No; so he looked very queer for a short time, and at last said, 'I don't know, sir; but some people shew marks much sooner than others: I have seen some that appeared but little injured after the punishment that the law allows, but others, whose backs are soft, I think might be as bad, or nearly as bad, as the backs of the complainants.' 'Ah,' replied the justice, 'you think so?' and after a few more words, for there was very little consultation, the other magistrate not caring to support a force which he could not well prevent, they were ordered back to gaol again, with the understanding that their mistress should be spoken to. This was an atrocious case; for these Negroes were cruelly maltreated, and by the slave laws of Jamaica they ought to have been emancipated, or, at least, their owner ought to have been heavily fined; but no redress was obtained, and this too frequently being the case, the poor wretches do not very often lay their complaints before the partial justices for legal redress, (as they get an additional flogging for bringing such a charge, if not well proved,) but weep over, and lament their hard and degrading lot in secret." pp. 25—31.

"The time of labour for the slaves, generally, is from sunrise to sunset; viz. from five o'clock to seven, one half the year, and from six to six, or thereabout, the other half. They are generally summoned from their slumbers by the cracking of the driver's whip, about half an hour before daylight: which whip, as it is pretty long and heavy, makes the valleys resound and the welkin ring with its alarming sounds; and woe be to the hapless slave who does not lend a willing ear and speedy footsteps to its repeated calls." "If he be absent at roll-call, the judge, juror, and executioner, all stand by him in the shape of an inexorable driver, and, without any defence or leave of appeal, he is

subjected to the lash. Nor will a trifling excuse serve the Black female : " she makes the best of her way to take her place, her unequal share of the task, by the strong-armed and stout-made man, in the well dressed-up rank of the gang. Should she be too late, her sex and slender form, or gentler nature, will not avail ; but, as if devoid of feeling, she is laid down by force, and punished with many stripes on those parts which shall be nameless for me, but which in women, for decency's sake, ought never to be exposed. Surely nature is outraged at such devilish indelicacies."

" Out of this time is allowed half an hour for breakfast, and two hours for dinner ; but many overseers have the first shell-blow for dinner at half past twelve o'clock, and the second at two, to go to the field again, as they are not very particular when they are busy in crop, or wish to have a certain quantity of work done. Independent of this also, in crop-time, the gangs are divided, and one half must work, at night, whilst the other half sleeps, though on some estates, where they have great strength, as they term it, (viz. where the Negroes are more numerous than strict necessity requires for the quantity of land in cultivation,) the whole number is divided into three parts ; so that on most sugar estates, the slaves work one half the year three nights in the week independent of the days, and on the others two nights a week. With respect to the hardness of the labour it is not greater than (perhaps not so great as) our husbandmen are accustomed to in England : nor do I think it possible for any men to work so hard in a tropical climate as they could in a cold one ; but the length of time that they are employed (viz. eleven or twelve hours, besides the night work,) is more than was intended for man to bear, and must hasten debility and old age. For the poor women it is a great deal too much, as their frail frames cannot stand it many years." pp. 47—50.

" I am aware that there is a law in Jamaica, imposing a fine on proprietors or overseers, for compelling the Negroes to do certain kinds of labour on the Sabbath ; but it is notorious that this law is altogether a dead letter, and that, with respect to their grounds, the Negroes not only go of their own accord to work there, as not having sufficient time allowed them otherwise ; but if they are found inattentive, it is a custom to send one of the book-keepers, on that holy day, to see that all the slaves are at work, and to watch them a certain time, that there may not be a want of food." p. 71.

" The goodness of the Almighty, in ordaining every seventh day a day of rest from labour, was of the greatest consequence to man, even in a temporal point of view, as most of the human race are labourers. That Omniscient Eye which looks into futurity, and has weighed

the hearts of all men in a balance, foresaw that when men multiplied upon the earth, the powerful would oppress the weak, and that the rich would require perpetual labour from the poor ; that this fatigue of the body would weigh down the soul, and destroy or very much diminish the powers of the mind : he therefore, in his own time, commanded the Sabbath to be kept holy, that man, who is in part an immortal creature, might reverence, and worship his Creator, learn the nature and value of his being, and with fear and trembling, but in humble reliance, prepare for that never-ending state of eternity for which he was at first destined.

" By the Israelites, under the covenant of works, the seventh day was very strictly kept, and the Sabbath-breaker was commanded to be stoned to death, by a statute of Levitical Law. The Ten Commandments have lost none of their force under the covenant of grace, or Christian dispensation, and the Sabbath has been kept strictly and religiously, by most Christians, in all ages of the church of Christ ; yet in the West-Indian colonies, planted by Christian nations, and particularly in Jamaica, the largest colony of highly-favoured and Christian Britain, the Sabbath is worse kept than by Turks themselves. It is not enough that most of the Slaves must work in their grounds a part of that holy day, but, to add to the abomination, a market must be kept also on the Sunday, for the sale of provisions, vegetables, fruit, &c. It is the only market-day which the poor Negroes and Coloured Slaves have ; and, instead of worshipping their God, they are either cultivating their portions of land to preserve life, or trudging like mules with heavy loads, five, ten, or even twenty miles to a market, to sell the little surplus of their provision grounds, or to barter it for a little salt fish to season their poor meals ; or, what is much worse, to spend, very often, the value in new destructive rum, which intoxicates them, and drowns for a short time the reflection that they are despised and burdened Slaves.

" I shall never forget the horror and disgust which I felt on going on shore, for the first time, in Kingston, in the month of August, 1819 : it was on a Sunday, and I had to pass by the Negro market, where several thousands of human beings, of various nations and colours, but principally Negroes, instead of worshipping their Maker on his holy day, were busily employed in all kinds of traffick in the open streets. Here were Jews with shops and standings as at a fair, selling old and new clothes, trinkets, and small wares at cent. percent. to adorn the Negro person ; there were low Frenchmen and Spaniards, and People of Colour, in petty shops and stalls ; some selling their bad rum, gin, tobacco, &c. ; others, salt provisions, and small articles of dress ; and many of them bartering with the Slave or purchasing his



surplus provisions to retail again; poor free people and servants, also, from all parts of the city, to purchase vegetables, &c. for the following week. The different noises and barbarous tongues recalled to one's memory the confusion of Babel; but the drunkenness of some, with the imprecations and obscenities of others, put one in mind rather of a pandemonium, or residence of devils. Surely the gates or entrances to this city, instead of being entrances which lead to solemn temples, or gates of heaven, as they should be in a Christian country and on a Christian Sabbath, are much more like gates directing to the broad way that leadeth to destruction, that leadeth to hell itself." pp. 64—67.

"Marriage; that blessing of civilized and even of savage life, is protected in the case of the slaves by no legal sanction. It cannot be said to exist among them. Those, therefore, who live together as man and wife, are liable to be separated by the caprice of their master, or by sale for the satisfaction of his creditors.

"The Slaves in general have little or no access to the means of Christian instruction.

"The effect of the want of such instruction, as well as of the absence of any marriage tie, is, that the most unrestrained licentiousness (exhibited in a degrading, disgusting, and depopulating promiscuous intercourse) prevails almost universally among the Slaves; and is encouraged; no less universally by the debaucheries of their superiors the Whites."—*Brief View*.

"I have resided," says Mr. Bickell, "nearly five years in Jamaica, and have preached two or three sermons almost every Sunday: many other clergymen have also exerted themselves, but to very little purpose, as far as the slaves are concerned, as those horrid and legalized scenes are just the same; for this Sunday market is a bait of Satan, to draw away the ignorant Negro: his temporal and pressing natural wants are set in opposition to his spiritual ones; and the former prevail to that degree that most of the churches in the island are nearly empty." pp. 67, 68.

"It is chiefly owing to the institution and due observance of the Sabbath, that true religion and morality are kept alive in the world; and I would lay it down therefore as an axiom, that before the great body of Negro and other Slaves can have any proper ideas of the Christian religion, the Sunday markets must be done away with, the labouring in their grounds on the Sabbath must be for-

bidden; for to pretend to make them moral and religious, and to cause them to break the Sabbath at the same time, is not only highly offensive to Almighty God, but is grossly insulting to the correct feeling and common sense of a truly Christian people." pp. 68, 69.

"In some of the parishes a considerable number of marriages have taken place."

"The same parishes where religion has made the greatest progress, there, also, the greatest number of marriages have been solemnized amongst the slaves. In Kingston and St. Thomas's in the East, in particular, a great number of couples have been married: in the former parish about 2000, (one-third perhaps from Port-Royal, St. David's, and other parishes,) and in the latter 1500, within these last seven or eight years. In Spanish-town, (or St. Catherine's,) St. Andrew's, and St. David's, a good many have been married also, and a few in some other parishes; but in several others none at all. In the small town of Port-Royal, which is quite separated from the other part of the parish, during the two years and three months that I served it, I married twelve or fourteen couple, free people and slaves; and several more were about to be married when I quitted the parish in April 1823. This is not a great number to be sure, but more than had been married there for twelve years previously to my taking the cure. Two or three of these couples had lived together in a state of concubinage for many (I believe nearly twenty) years; and married, I can confidently say, from religious motives, as did some of the others. In two instances, free men of Colour married Black women, and in one particular case, the man, a very decent mechanic, applied to me for advice, as he said he had lived with the woman many years, and, knowing now that it was wicked to live in that way any longer, they wished to be married; but that he had been much laughed and scoffed at by many in the town for his good and virtuous intentions, as the woman was older than himself, and had had a child by some other man before she lived with him. Having ascertained that it was not his intention to desert her, whether they were married or not, I advised him by all means to marry, and not to mind what irreligious and wicked people said. They came to my house to have the ceremony performed; and such was the crowd of low and noisy persons around it, that I was obliged to send for a constable to keep the peace. After the ceremony was performed the rabble followed, shouting and jeering as if the newly married pair had committed some dreadful crime. I was obliged in two or three instances to have recourse to the constable on these occasions, when they first began to marry, so rare a thing was it in Port-Royal; but I am happy to say, that, before I quitted the parish, I could throw open the doors

and allow them to look on, which they did with much propriety and attention." pp. 91—93.

"The evils of slavery, great as they have already been shewn to be, would yet be less lamentable than they really are, if they affected the slaves only; but truly distressing to an awakened and well-regulated Christian mind is it to witness the demoralizing effects brought on the White part of the population also, nearly the whole of whom live in a state of open and acknowledged, and even boasted, fornication. It is a well-known and notorious fact, that very few of the White men in the West-Indies marry, except a few professional men, and some few merchants in the towns, and here and there, in the country, a proprietor or large attorney. Most of the merchants and shopkeepers in the towns, and the whole of the deputy planters, (namely overseers,) in all parts of the country, have what is called a house-keeper, who is their concubine or mistress, and is generally a free woman of Colour; but the book-keepers, who are too poor and too dependent to have any kind of establishment, generally take some Mulatto, or Black female slave, from the estate where they are employed, or live in a more general state of licentiousness.

"This is so very common a vice, and so far from being accounted scandalous, that it is looked upon by every person as a matter of course; and if a newly-arrived young man happens to have brought a few moral or religious ideas with him from Great Britain, he is soon deprived of them by taunt and ridicule, and is in a short time unblushingly amalgamated into the common mass of hardened and barefaced licentiousness. This does not depreciate the privileged White men even in the eyes of most Creole White ladies; for they often pay visits to the mistress of a relative, and fondle and caress the little ones: nay I have known some married ladies pay visits to the kept mistresses of rich men, who were not relatives, though they would not look upon a more respectable woman of the same colour, who might be married to a Brown man." pp. 104, 105.

"What a horrible picture is this! In Jamaica alone, there are seven or eight thousand White men; nearly the whole of whom live in this wicked state, in defiance of the commands of God, and in spite of the examples and precepts inculcated upon their minds in the mother country." p. 106.

"This unchristian way of living, this almost total absence of the sacred rite of marriage amongst the Whites, has been productive of that numerous and intermediate race between Whites and Blacks, commonly called People of Colour." p. 111.

"The greater part of these live also in a state of fornication: many are condemned to do so by their poverty and a total want of employment; for the poor females

are brought up to no business, with very few exceptions, nor is there any demand for their services as servants. Except, then, their parents have left them sufficient to live upon, (which is but seldom the case,) they must prostitute their persons or starve; for such is the contempt with which the men of Colour are treated, (even by the lowest of the White men,) and such is the poverty of many of them, that most of the Brown women prefer being kept by a White man to being the wife of a man of her own colour and rank, though it can scarcely be said that they have any rank at all. Such were the disadvantages that the Brown men laboured under that, till within these last few years, marriage was seldom solemnized between two People of Colour; but of late, and particularly in Kingston, and two or three other parishes where the doctrines of Christianity have been most propagated, a considerable number have been married, and live in an exemplary and respectable manner. Many more would follow these praiseworthy examples, were it not for the White man's gold and fine promises, connected with the idea in the female mind of having a fairer offspring; for such is the disgrace and disadvantage attached to colour, that the greater part of the females take a great pride in seeing their children progressively advancing to the privileged colour and cast." pp. 112, 113.

The following anecdote will aptly shew the difficulties with which missionaries have to contend, even on estates where absentee proprietors are most desirous of affording them every requisite facility. Sir George Rose's zeal in the cause of religious instruction is well known; and yet it is on one of his estates that the following circumstances took place.

"I know one instance in the parish of St. Thomas in the East, on an estate belonging to Sir George Rose, where one of the Wesleyans, a very correct and zealous man, had been in the habit of attending; and, from what he had taught them, several of the Negroes were in the habit of meeting the evening, in one of the Negro huts, to offer up a few short prayers, and to instruct each other as well as they could. This however displeased the overseer, and they were ordered not to do it again. They then, I believe, complained to their minister of the hardship of not being allowed to worship their Maker in the inoffensive way he had taught them; and he represented the innocence of the practice, and impossibility of any danger arising to the property: but the overseer, instead of being persuaded, was enraged the more, and took an early opportunity of punishing the complainants for some pretended fault, and said tauntingly, (whilst the whip was being applied to their backs, by a stout

driver,) 'You'll go and tell the Methodist parson again, will you? I'll make you tell him for something.' And they were punished more than usual, for having complained to one whom they considered a friend, and who they thought would be able and willing to protect them from the cruel and cutting lash of the whip, for merely worshipping their God, and innocently perusing his holy word.

"When the missionary was informed of the unjust floggings and unfeeling taunts, he remonstrated with the overseer upon his unreasonable conduct; and, remarking that he was allowed and encouraged by the proprietor to instruct the Negroes, further observed, (on finding that he could do no good with the deputy,) that he should represent the matter to the attorney; and in his warmth said, (to the best of my recollection,) if the attorney did not countenance his teaching the slaves in a proper manner, it should be represented to the proprietor Sir G. Rose himself. The cunning and revengeful overseer, however, anticipated him, and went to the attorney with a woeful tale of the dire intentions of the poor preacher against them both. The consequence was, that he was very nearly being brought into serious trouble; for the attorney represented the case to some of the vestry, and they talked of calling a meeting to take the affair into consideration. It was, however, hushed up (I was informed) by the senior missionary of the connexion going up from Kingston, and making some kind of apology for the humane and worthy, but (as the planters thought) too zealous interference of his fellow-minister." pp. 210, 211.

"In none of the colonies of Great Britain have those legal facilities been afforded to the Slave, to purchase his own freedom, which have produced such extensively beneficial effects in the colonial possessions of Spain and Portugal, where the Slaves have been manumitted in large numbers, not only without injury, but with benefit to the master, and with decided advantage to the public peace and safety. On the contrary, in many of our colonies, even the voluntary manumission of Slaves by their masters is obstructed, and in some rendered nearly impossible, by large fines."—*Brief View*.

In the same strain, Mr. Bickell observes, that

"The obstructions thrown in the way of emancipation are also a very great evil. It is provided at the same time that every proprietor or owner should give a bond to the proper authorities, in the sum of 100*l*., for every slave he might emancipate, to be claimed from him or his executors, in case

such slave should become chargeable to the parish. I do not mean to say that every slave, made free, is likely to become chargeable; but I am convinced that it has acted as a very great and insurmountable check to the liberal intentions of many owners, and has kept many a slave in bondage, who would otherwise have been enjoying his freedom. To make the best of it, it is but half a boon.

"But to other modes of emancipation there are still greater obstacles; for if an industrious Negro, in a favoured situation, saves a little money, the sum demanded for his freedom is, in most instances, so enormous, that it is but seldom effected. In many cases where free Brown or Black men have been connected with female slaves, they have had a wish to purchase their freedom out of love to the wife, as she is called, or, if she be a mother, perhaps to the child or children also; but so much has been demanded, that they have been obliged to relinquish the generous idea. With one instance of this kind I was well acquainted, as it happened in the city of Kingston. A decent free man, a tradesman, had lived with a Black female slave belonging to a certain White lady, (whose name I shall not now mention,) and much desired to purchase her that he might give her her freedom and marry her. He applied to the mistress, who did not altogether object to selling the young woman, but demanded so great a sum for her, that the poor fellow could not raise so much, even by selling all he had. The common price for a good domestic female slave was then, from 100*l*. to 150*l*. currency; but how much dost thou think, gentle reader, that this virtuous and humane White lady asked for this her female slave, who wished to be freed and married to the man she loved? Why, the small sum of 200*l*. currency!! at least 70*l*. more than she was worth; nor could she be prevailed on to sell her for less, although assailed by the prayers of the free lover, and the tears of his enslaved mistress: so that she was neither emancipated nor married, for the man did not like to marry a slave; but she was allowed to live on in the same wicked way; though, had a moderate and equitable sum been demanded, she would have been emancipated, and her children (now being slaves and bastards) would have been free and legitimate. This is not a solitary case; it often occurs; and in many instances they will not sell a valuable slave on any terms.

"There is a much greater liberality in this respect in the Spanish colonies, where emancipation cannot be withheld from slaves, on certain sums being offered, and on other certain conditions; there being fixed laws on this head.

"But in our colonies there is no inducement held out; for the slave is a complete chattel, a mere machine impelled by the whip, as the master has the power of perpetual possession. However deserving

or fortunate the slave may be, in being steady and industrious, and having friends and a little money, it avails nothing; for, if the owner choose, he or she must die in bondage. Indeed, being good and industrious would, in nine cases out of ten, rivet his chains more tightly; for the more he does, the more valuable he is, and therefore the less likely to be parted with. Go to any estate or plantation in the British West Indies, and offer a fair sum for a worthless Negro, he or she would be readily and gladly sold to you. Offer a good price for an ingenious tradesman, a hard-working steady field-Negro, or an interesting young female, and say that you wish to make them free; the owner or manager would reply, 'No, sir; these are some of my most valuable slaves; I would not part with either of these men for more than his value. And as to that young woman, sir, she will work as well as any man I have got: she is likely also to have a large family. I cannot spare her for any sum!!' " pp. 32—37.

Mr. Bickell states, that, although he has confined his observations to Jamaica, yet that, having visited some of the other colonies, he can safely assert,—

"That the picture drawn of Slavery in Jamaica, will pretty faithfully delineate its features, its actual and present state, in all the other slave-holding islands and colonies belonging to Great Britain. There may be, and is, a variety of shades, some darker and some brighter; but, as a whole, it will be found tolerably correct." p. 119.

In some colonies, however, as Demerara, Berbice, and St. Lucie,

"The evils and hardships of the Slaves are even greater than in Jamaica, particularly in the two former; for the fatness and abundant goodness of the soil has augmented the cupidity of the planters there, to that degree, that the poor Negroes are very much over-worked, to increase the enormous produce, and to cause their masters' pockets to overflow with money." pp. 119, 120.

"Were the colonists inclined of themselves to make any material and beneficial changes in their slave code, neither the British government nor British people would think of interfering; but experience teaches us, that their professions, with respect to their Slaves, are unmeaning and empty, and that even the few concessions that have been wrung from them are not *bona fide* fulfilled. Witness their compelling them to labour in their grounds, and permitting them to make sugar on Sundays. Witness their not allowing them time to attend the places of worship (the pretended chapels, which were never built) for moral and religious instruction. Witness the non-redress of their just com-

plaints, for severity and cruelty of punishment. Witness their throwing numerous obstacles in the way of individual emancipation. Witness their preventing those of the eunates who wished to attend on some of the estates, to preach and catechise from doing so, and thereby shutting the doors of instruction on the poor Slaves altogether!

"It must be plain to every impartial person indeed, that the colonists do not wish or intend to lighten the hardships of their Slaves, or grant them any privileges, if it be likely to lessen their income: their principal object is to keep them in total ignorance, and to compel them to raise the greatest possible quantity of produce; for they calculate thus—'If we do away with the Sunday-market, there must be more time given to the Slaves, and our crops will fall short: if we allow them to be instructed, it will take a little more time, and the Negroes will also know too much to be content.' They therefore do, and will, oppose all interference by the British Parliament, because they wish, and intend at all hazards, to keep the Slaves and their descendants in perpetual bondage. It will be for the British Government to determine, if such a cruel and impolitic system shall be allowed to go on, to the shame and outrage of religion and humanity, and to the risk of so great a loss to the British crown." pp. 137, 138.

The following passages will serve to counteract some of the prevalent notions so industriously propagated by West Indians of the enviable comforts of the Negro slave; comforts which, it is unblushingly said, place him above the British peasant.

"Of the great care taken of the Slaves in sickness, and of the boasted and frequent attendance of the medical men on the different properties, I have never seen any very flattering specimens, though I have been on a great many plantations, and have seen plenty of doctors. Their hot-houses, or hospitals, are, generally speaking, filthy receptacles: they are very happily styled hot-houses, for they are hot enough; as the hospital is, on most estates, a confined room, very often an earthen floor: in this, is a platform of boards, raised two or three feet high, like the soldier's guard-bed, on which the sick lie down in their own clothes, covered sometimes with a blanket, and sometimes not: on some large estates they have a superior kind of hospital, on a first floor, with better accommodations. The hot-house is often the place where the Negroes are also confined in the stocks: so that it is both hospital and gaol." pp. 52, 53.

"The feeding and clothing of the Slaves have been much over-rated by the colonists; and, on the other hand, somewhat depreciated by the advocates of the Africans, or abolitionists; for what can be

more absurd than to hear it constantly reiterated, that the Negroes in our colonies are better fed and better clothed than the British peasantry? If the quantity of food be meant, the favour is even then very frequently, I might say generally, with our own poor; but in the quality there is no comparison,—for none but a bigotted and low-minded planter, or some interested professional resident, who cannot return to reside in this country, would compare the coarse yams and cocoas, and the stringy indigestible plantains, with a few bad or rotten herrings, to the wholesome bread of this country, and to potatoes and other fine vegetables, with a small portion of fresh meat or bacon, which the English cottager enjoys. I have seen a good deal of the state of the English poor, having served curacies in Somersetshire, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire, and Wiltshire, besides having an intimate acquaintance with Devonshire; and I can conscientiously say, that I never saw any one, even a pauper, who lived in the mean hoggish way that the Slaves in the West Indies do; and, moreover, that if such coarse food as the Negroes generally eat were offered them, they would reject it, (at least much dislike it,) as thinking it hardly fit for human and rational beings: English stomachs could not well digest it, three times a day. I know mine could not; and I can assert with much truth, that the coarsest Irish potatoes, with a little milk, or buttermilk and salt, are preferable to the Negro yams and green plantains; at least, I would sooner have them, and I think most of the British poor would approve of my taste, had they an opportunity of judging.

“The English poor are also much better clothed; for where is there a poor cottager that has not a decent cloth or fustian coat, of any colour he pleases, with other parts of his dress suitable, independent of good and warm stockings, and sound shoes to keep his feet from the gravel and dirt? But what has the Slave? He has for his best, (from his master, as I before observed,) a large baize surtout, which hangs about him like a sack, and would as well fit any person you please as himself; and, moreover, a pair of coarse trowsers and coarse shirt of Osnaburgh, which, with the coarsest kind of nat, is his whole wardrobe; for this is the general livery or badge of Slavery. The female Slaves are clothed as much inferior to our poor women; and both Negro men and women are without stockings and shoes, and generally go in a half-dressed state, viz. without coats or gowns; the women's petticoats up to their knees; and very often before fresh supplies are given out many of them are in a ragged state, and some almost in a state of nudity; and yet it is said, they are better off than the poor in Great Britain!

“On the other hand, however, they are not so badly off, as to food, as many people

in this country imagine: for, as I before remarked, the quantity, in most cases, is sufficient; and as to clothes, they have no need of such warm garments as the poor in this our happy island. It cannot be expected they should be so well off, even in these respects; but if they were, they have not the comfortable cottage, and warm bed with decent furniture, and the snug chimney-corner of the English peasant, which no one, not even a lord or a prince, dares to enter into without permission. No, in his mud-built and straw-covered hut, without a window or a chimney, or two or three boards, raised a little above the floor, or on the floor itself; the Negro Slave lies down on his mat, very often uncovered; and if he wants a little fire, as in the mountains they sometimes do, he must light his few sticks in the open air, and, like an animal I could mention, sit upon his heels shivering by it. It is painful indeed to carry on the comparison; but, independent of all this, is it nothing that the peasant's son is most commonly sent to school and taught to read his Bible, and oftentimes to write and cypher, and when grown up can travel to any part of this free country to better his condition, none molesting him, or daring to make him afraid?” pp. 56—59.

Many of the colonial clergymen, Mr. Bickell observes, are anxious to advance the knowledge of religion, but are prevented through the general profanation of the Sabbath, and the labouring and marketing of the Negroes on that day. Some who have attempted to introduce reforms have been stigmatised as Methodists; and it is scarcely safe for them to venture to preach against such vices as fornication, Sabbath-breaking, &c. One consequence of this intolerance of zealous and pious clergymen is, that many have been ordained, both as rectors and curates, who are but little qualified and less disposed to contend with the prevailing evils. One of these curates is stated to have been owner of a small trading vessel, passing between Kingston and Cuba. On one occasion “he went on board of her himself, made a voyage in her to Cuba, and returned safe and prosperous with an assorted cargo; some part of which (I was credibly informed) was exposed for sale in his own parish, not in his name, but for his account. The only punishment he incurred for this disgraceful conduct, was the loss of his salary for the time he was absent, through the vestry of the parish. This thoughtless Creole was only in deacon's orders, though he managed, after some time, to get testi-

monials signed to enable him to take priest's orders also, and was on his passage home for that purpose; but the vessel in which he embarked never reached England, as it was wrecked; and the poor young man, I am sorry to add, perished, with nearly all the others on board." pp. 98, 99.

"Another of these clergymen, a rector of a large parish, was exposed very lately in one of the public or island papers, for his indecent observations on some Coloured females at a funeral where he officiated.

"Another, who had hesitated between an ironmonger's shop and the church, and who had been appointed curate to a large country parish, which was partially disturbed about Christmas last, was (instead of being at his post, where it may be supposed a clergyman might have been of some service) strutting about Kingston and Spanish-town in large spurs *a la militaire*, idling away his precious time, and taking his fill of pleasure. Can a serious man who wishes well to the cause of religion in general, and to the Church of England in particular, see such things without thinking of the words of the prophet Ezekiel, chap. xxxiii.?" pp. 100, 101.

Mr. Bickell supposes an objector, to blame his exposure of the Jamaica clergy as unnecessary: bishops having been appointed to remedy all defects, he might without injury have omitted it. His answer is, that though he rejoices in the appointment of West-Indian bishops, he is sure they will never see what he has seen. Even if they were to visit different parts of the colony, they would not be admitted, as he had been, behind the scenes.

"A veil would be studiously thrown over the most prominent parts of the evils of the system, by every person with whom they might converse, and on every estate they might choose to visit. There would be no floggings, nor even a single stroke of the whip, in a bishop's presence; no indecency to shock his sight, nor any thing said to offend his ears, and if he attended at any church, it would be crowded by design and order, for that time: every thing, in fact, would be acted so as to deceive, and make a favourable but false impression." pp. ix, x.

Our author's remarks on the oppressions and disabilities of the free People of Colour, notwithstanding their many claims to favour, are peculiarly just and seasonable.—

"It has been asserted, that nothing but coercion can induce a Negro to labour, more than barely to raise enough for his subsistence. This is extremely erroneous;

witness the great number of free Blacks in the towns of Jamaica: in Kingston they are most of them good mechanics, and work as regularly and as hard as White men in this country; they also conduct themselves as well, can read and write many of them, and are more respectably clad than White men of the same class in England. In Port-Royal, just the same; they are industrious and intelligent, and several of them (to their credit be it said) have more, much more, religion than the low White men there, who affect to despise them." p. 16.

"A great part of the People of Colour, in the towns, are constant attendants at places of worship; and many of them, both men and women, possess respectable property in houses and Slaves,—for a considerable part of the houses in Kingston belong to Coloured females. In different parts of the country also, many of the men, and some women, have small coffee-mountains, and some few have them of a large extent. Of late years a few privileges have been granted them; such as their being permitted to give evidence in courts of justice, and to hold property to any extent; but no Brown man is allowed to serve on juries, to be an overseer or book-keeper, to fill even the low office of constable or beadle, or (whatever property he may have) to vote for a member of Assembly; but although he cannot save deficiency on any White man's plantation (viz. though he cannot, on any estate or plantation, fill any low office of a White man, either as carpenter, or smith, or book-keeper, so as to assist in making up the number that must be kept according to law, in proportion to the quantity of Slaves, except it be on another Brown man's property), yet he is obliged to turn out in the militia, and to clothe and accoutre himself, at his own expense, which expense is more than some of them can well bear." pp. 114, 115.

"It is very evident, therefore, that it is not to the Negroes as Slaves only that the colonists have objections; for when they are free they are considered equally beneath the favoured Whites: even those descended from them, on one side only, however far removed, are treated with contempt and disdain: for they are not accounted worthy to sit in their presence, nor hardly to pick up the crumbs under their table.

"Colour therefore, colour is the mark of disgrace; colour is the stain for which those who have the least of it pay so dearly and suffer so much, from those who call themselves Christians." pp. 116, 117.

In a recent communication of the Anti-slavery Society, the injurious effects of high prices of produce, and the beneficial effects of low prices, on the comfort and well-being of the slaves, are maintained. Without the

slightest apprehension that he is illustrating this hypothesis, Mr. Bickell states some facts which bear directly upon it. Speaking of jobbing gangs, or gangs of Negroes, consisting usually of from twenty to forty stout male and female slaves, who are hired out to perform some of the heaviest labour of estates, he observes:

"They work very hard; and before sugars were depressed in price, three or four years since, their masters were paid ten pounds per acre for digging cane-holes, when each Negro could earn them a dollar a day; but for the last two or three years, the jobbers have got only six or eight pounds an acre, and can, with difficulty, find employment for their gangs at that rate. These jobbers used to make fortunes in a short time; as a slave, by his labour, would in three or four years gain for his owner more than his prime cost. But it may be supposed that the Negroes have a great antipathy to being sold to these jobbing gentlemen; for independent of the continual heavy labour, they are obliged to be almost altogether away from their own huts (which, though poor, are far better than the temporary ones) and grounds, except a few Saturdays and the Sundays: their poor children also must be neglected, and their little stock lost or gone astray. So great is the objection they have of being sold to jobbers, that I have known many of them run away to avoid it: a long time often intervenes before they can be recovered; and it is not a trifle that will make a Negro run the risk of getting imprisoned, with two or three floggings into the bargain, or perhaps get transported from the island for life. These jobbing gangs have been compared, very aptly, to over-wrought or over-driven horses: the poor slaves composing them may certainly, without exaggeration, be compared to the London hacks. A double price is paid for them, and they are worked so very much that they do not last long. It is *gold versus life*," pp 51, 52.

This statement shews clearly, how it is that high prices operate in increasing the labour and diminishing the comforts of *jobbing gangs*. The price of their labour being raised by temporary and accidental circumstances, their owner is tempted to compress more of that labour into a small space—in short, to make hay while the sun shines—even at the expense of overdriving his slaves, and exposing to risk both their health and life. Estimating the work of a gang at an acre per day,

the income of a single year, at 10*l*. an acre, would be 3,000*l*.; at 6*l*. an acre, 1,800*l*.,—the difference being no less than 1,200*l*. And if by additional exaction, and the abridgment of the time usually allowed the slaves, the jobber had it in his power to add fifty acres more to the tale of their labour, he would thereby raise his income to 3,500*l*.; whereas at 6*l*. the same degree of exaction could only raise his income to 2,100*l*. He could obviously, therefore, afford to kill more slaves in the former than in the latter case, and would therefore be more strongly tempted to overwork them, especially as he would fear the higher rate might be but temporary. And is not this exaction of labour a direct effect of high prices?

And let it not be supposed that this effect is confined to jobbing gangs. It extends to the slaves universally. The proprietor of a sugar estate is just as much tempted to overwork his Negroes, when the price of sugar is high, as the jobber is when the price of holing an acre of land is high; while, on the contrary, when prices are low, and little or no profit is to be made by overworking his slaves, as compared with the loss of health or life which may be the consequence, he will feel it to be his interest rather to spare his Negroes, with a view to their increase and improvement, than to hazard the loss caused by overworking them without an equivalent. There may, it is true, be benevolent individuals whom no temptation would induce to oppress their slaves. But it cannot be doubted, that, in the mass of instances, the effect would be as has been stated.

This view of the subject shews the pernicious operation, on the comfort of the slaves, of that system of bounties and protecting duties on the sugar grown by slave-labour which prevails in this country. This impost is objectionable, not merely because the sum of a million and a half, which in this way is exacted

from the people of this country, is a most unnecessary and oppressive burden: nor merely because by these restrictions our trade with other parts of the world is cramped and fettered; but mainly because it adds to the misery of the slave, and tends to prolong and to embitter his bondage.

Accordingly in the Bahama islands, where no sugar is grown, and where no impulse is given to slave labour by bounties and protecting duties on that article, the slaves increase at the rate of about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 per cent. per annum: whereas in Demerara, where the largest quantity of sugar is made in proportion to the population, and consequently the sum received in bounties and protecting duties is in the same proportion the largest, the slaves decrease still more rapidly than they increase in the Bahamas. In Jamaica, the proportion of sugar to the slave population is smaller than in Demerara, and the decrease of the slaves is smaller; being about one per cent. instead of two and a half. In Barbadoes, the proportion of sugar is still smaller than in Jamaica; and there, there is a small increase of the population. In short, the principle will be found to hold good universally in slave colonies, that the wretchedness and decrease of the slaves are aggravated by the larger profits of the planter, whether these larger profits are the effect of natural causes, such as comparative fertility of soil, or of artificial encouragement by bounties and duties. The slaves, let it be always remembered, receive no wages. They stand on the footing of cattle or machinery; with this difference, that when the demand for the produce of the labour of cattle or machinery increases, the number of cattle or of machines may be proportionably increased; whereas, in the case of slaves, the slave trade being prohibited, the increased demand can only be met by an in-

creased exertion of the muscles of the existing stock, which is extracted from them by an increased use of the cart-whip.

What measures will be taken for the extinction of slavery is a matter of uncertainty; but it is obvious, that if, while we profess to seek its amelioration, with a view to its final extinction, we, at the same time, continue those bounties and protecting duties which tend, as we have seen, to aggravate its severity, we are undoing by one set of measures what we propose to effect by another. It is highly important, therefore, that both parliament and the public should attain to right views on this subject. No mere enactments can avail much in diminishing the evils of slavery, while solid rewards are attached to the unmeasured exaction of slave-labour;—while a high premium continues to be paid by the public of Great Britain for every ton of sugar which is produced by slaves. And are the people of this country guiltless in silently permitting this system to be prolonged? The average annual sum which each proprietor of a sugar estate in the West Indies has been receiving from the people of this country, in bounties and protecting duties, has been about 700*l*. This is neither more nor less than our eleemosynary contribution to the support of the whips, and chains, and stocks, and gibbets which grind down the poor Negroes to the dust, and which have converted into a charnel house one of the fairest portions of the globe. This state of things cannot last. Indeed it only requires the concurrent exertion of the people of England to put an end to it for ever. That exertion will, without doubt, be made: and, when made, it must succeed. Reason, justice, humanity, policy, and the sacred voice of religion, all plead for it, and they will not long plead in vain.